## PROPOSED USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS TO SUPPRESS THE SPECIFIC NAMES "VENULOSA" LAURENTI, 1768, AS PUBLISHED IN THE COMBINATION "RANA VENULOSA" AND "TIBIATRIX" LAURENTI, 1768, AS PUBLISHED IN THE COMBINATION "HYLA TIBIATRIX", TOGETHER WITH THE GENERIC NAME "ACRODYTES" FITZINGER, 1843 (CLASS AMPHIBIA, ORDER SALIENTIA)

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The purpose of the present application is to ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature to suppress the specific names *venulosa* and *tibiatrix*, both of Laurenti, 1768, as published in the combinations *Rana venulosa* and *Hyla tibiatrix* respectively.

**2.** The group of neotropical hylid frogs in question are characterised by having paired lateral vocal sacs behind the angle of the jaws in the males and in the absence of any co-ossification of the skin with the roof of the skull. Until recently these frogs were considered to be only one species, but it is now realised that several species are included in the group.

**3.** In 1768, Laurenti (: 31) assigned the name *Rana venulosa* to a figure in Seba (1734, Vol. I, Pl. 72, fig. 4), giving the following description : " *Corpore venulosa, maculoso, maculis confluentibus, insulsis interjectis ; pedibus digitatus.*" The locality was given as " *Indiis* ". In only one other instance has the combination *Rana venulosa* been used. This is to be found in Daudin (1802 : 24). The following year (1803) Daudin used the combination *Hyla venulosa* Laurenti (: 71). Since that time the combination *Hyla venulosa* has persisted in the literature, although the references to it are relatively few.

**4.** From the description given by Daudin and from careful study of his figure (1802, Pl. 13) I can find no similarity between the frog described by Laurenti and illustrated by Seba and that mentioned by Daudin. The bizarre illustration in Seba has been associated with a group of frogs, which do not

resemble the figure nor the description based upon that figure. Seba's illustration most certainly is not of a hylid frog, and it is completely unrecognisable as any known member of that large group of frogs.

**5.** The nomenclatorial problem with *Hyla tibiatrix* is much the same as that of *Hyla venulosa*. Laurenti, 1768 (: 34) assigned the name *Hyla tibiatrix* to two figures in Seba (1734, Vol. I, Pl. 71, figs. 1–2) and gave the following description : " *Corpore dilute lactoe, maculis rubris, pedibus posticus palmatis. Mas coaxans utroque in latere colli, tibae inflar, inflat.*" The reference to locality given by Seba was "*Americanuarum* ". This name was treated as applying to a variety of *Rana venulosa* by Daudin in 1802, and in no time after that it was accorded a higher rank. The figure in Seba may reasonably be associated with any one of three genera of American hylid frogs. From the figure and description it is impossible to determine whether or not the skin is co-ossified with the skull and what is the condition of the vomerine teeth. These are characters that must be known to separate the genera in question.

**6.** Since the figure upon which the original description of *Rana venulosa* was based is unrecognisable as a member of the genus, and since the figure upon which the description of *Hyla tibiatrix* was based is not recognisable to genus, the specific names *venulosa* and *tibiatrix*, as published in the combinations *Rana venulosa* Laurenti, and *Hyla tibiatrix* Laurenti respectively should be considered *nomina dubia*.

**7.** A recent study of this group of frogs shows that the former wide-ranging " *Hyla venulosa* " actually is a composite of several species, the names of most of which have been hidden in the synonymy of *Hyla venulosa*. The oldest available names that can definitely be assigned to the two most widely distributed of these species are *Hyla spilomma* Cope, 1877 (: 86) and *Hyla zonata* Spix, 1824 (: 41). The first of these species ranges throughout eastern Mexico and northern Central America. The original description, accompanied by the definite type locality, are sufficient to identify this species beyond question. The latter species, *Hyla zonata*, occurs in the Amazon Basin of South America and extends into southern Central America. The original description, locality, and accompanying colour plate identify the nominal species with the population of these frogs occurring in the Amazon Basin. Although *Hyla zonata* was described in 1824 and *Hyla spilomma* in 1877, both have, for the most part, been referred to the synonymy of *Hyla venulosa*. It is recommended that, as part of the settlement represented by the proposed suppression of the *nomina dubia*, *Rana venulosa* Laurenti and *Hyla tibiatrix* Laurenti, these two specific names should be placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology*.

**8.** " *Hyla venulosa* " is the type species of the genus *Acrodytes* Fitzinger, 1843 (: 30). The suppression of the type species of this genus creates another nomenclatorial problem. However, the circumstances are such that Fitzinger

solved the problem himself. In his *Systema Reptilium* published in 1843 he listed eleven genera of hylid frogs, the third of which is *Phrynohyas* (: 30), under which he listed four subgenera :

Phrynohyas—

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|---|---|
| *Cephalophractus* Fitz. | *Cephalo. galeatus* Fitz. |
| *Trachycephalus* Tschud. | *Trachycephalus nigromaculatus* Tschud. |
| *Phrynohyas* | *Hyla zonata* Spix |
| *Acrodytes* | *Hyla venulosa* Daudin |

**9.** The type species (by monotypy) of *Phrynohyas* Fitzinger is thus *Hyla zonata* Spix. The specific name *zonata* is the oldest available specific name for the group of hylid frogs with paired lateral vocal sacs behind the angle of the jaws and without the skin co-ossified with the skull. The subgeneric name *Acrodytes* Fitzinger was not accompanied by a description or a figure and rests solely upon the single included species *Hyla venulosa*, which is the type species by monotypy of the taxon so named. That species, as already noted, is not identifiable, but if it had clearly been a species congeneric with *Hyla zonata* Spix, the name *Acrodytes* would have fallen as a junior synonym of *Phrynohyas* Fitzinger, for the latter was introduced as the name of a genus, while *Acrodytes* was proposed only as the name for one of the units accepted by Fitzinger as subgenera of that genus. Since *Hyla venulosa* is unidentifiable, the genus *Acrodytes* of which it is the type species is also unidentifiable. The name *Acrodytes* Fitzinger should therefore be suppressed by the Commission under its Plenary Powers. For those who consider the hylid frogs from Mexico and Central and South America to be a generically distinct group, the generic name which must be used is *Phrynohyas* Fitzinger.

**10.** In order to prevent further taxonomic confusion as to the concept of "*Hyla venulosa*", I ask the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature :—

(1) to use its Plenary Powers to suppress the under-mentioned names for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy :—

(a) the generic name *Acrodytes* Fitzinger, 1843 ;

(b) the under-mentioned specific names :—

(i) *venulosa* Laurenti, 1768, as published in the combination *Rana venulosa* ;

(ii) *tibiatrix* Laurenti, 1768, as published in the combination *Hyla tibiatrix* ;

(2) to place the under-mentioned generic name on the *Official List of Generic Names in Zoology* :—*Phrynohyas* Fitzinger, 1843 (gender : feminine) (type species, by monotypy : *Hyla zonata* Spix, 1824) ;

(3) to place the under-mentioned specific names on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* :—

(a) *zonata* Spix, 1824, as published in the combination *Hyla zonata* (specific name of type species of *Phrynohyas* Fitzinger, 1843) ;

(b) *spilomma* Cope, 1877, as published in the combination *Hyla spilomma* ;

(4) to place the under-mentioned generic name on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology* :—*Acrodytes* Fitzinger, 1843, as suppressed under the Plenary Powers under (1) above ;

(5) to place on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology* the specific names specified in (1)(b) above, as there suppressed under the Plenary Powers.

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